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[95] NOTHER, *vt.* To money; to approach sexually with or without the object's willingness; to sustain with something; to disturb; to course.
HALLBIRT, *n.* Nonsense; a lie.
CANT'T, *ab.* Will not, won't; may not, *f.*—*I* wont to, as, "I can't do that."
CRUB, *n.* Any food received from white source other than meat.
DE, *pron.* He; she; it.
DIM, *pron.* Him; her; it.
LOTS, *adj.* Many. As, "Lots of people."
MAUT DE, *ab.* Probably.
NEVER, *adv.* Not for some time, as, "I never heard"; not ever.
NEWS, *n.* Unbelievable report, as, "to hear his news"; gossip; information.
NOTHING, *n.* Anything; as, "I never see nothing"; no.
PACK, *vt.* To carry; to haul, as, "to pack dogs"; to steal, to carry off.

[96] Obviously all of these as well as all other words carry specific connotations for the Kaska which are sometimes different from their meanings in American speech. Thus a word like "lots," denoting "many," may be used to refer to a group of ten persons with the connotational expression that we would reserve for a rank of hundreds.

[97] Several cases of speech defect were noted. One girl, eight years old, stuttered slightly. A young man was pointed out as speaking little and as being unable to command the concentration of someone of any length. The defect was regarded with amusement and was even joked about to the young man's presence. Cases of deafness and mutism were also reported.*

[98] For emotive and vituperation, recourse is generally had to English. The use of such terms is stilted, as though there were no clear realization of their meaning. In situations of emotional stress, delivery is more rapid and under such conditions speakers also manifest a measure of the body, including the face, which affects the vocal cords.

[99] The Kaska Indians are not a gesticulating people, and the number of socially patterned gestures are relatively limited. *Anger* is expressed by frowning and by a narrowing of the eyes, shame and embarrassment, by covering the face with the hands and turning away the head. The latter gesture is more common among girls, being rarely used by boys and men. The explanation offered for the gesture was that the feeling of self-consciousness and shame is so intense that the individual does not want others to see her face. *Affection*, particularly between young people, either of the same or opposite sex, is generally expressed verbally but not by kissing. When the ethnographer's two year old daughter sought to kiss *Pete Wiley* (I), the latter demurred and cried, "Shame!" When the attempt was repeated, *Pete* sought to distract the younger girl by calling her attention to something else. *Mirth* and *endearment* (the latter rarely) are released in infectious laughter. *Acute hostility* may be expressed in refusing to talk to, or look upon, a person, as well as by a sullen, dark facial expression. These are the most common signs used to communicate emotional states, although there are other socially patterned means for the individual to express more personal emotional states. Further discussion of emotional expression is reserved for a later section.

[100] In narration, the hands and arms are sometimes used to aid communication. Thus to de-

*See also the discussion of linguistic theory, below, p. 190.

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while the progress of a boat in rough water, the hand dips up and down as the arm is slowly moved from one side of the speaker's body to the other. Shooting of a gun is illustrated by holding the left hand close to the speaker's face, the fingers close together touching the thumb. The other arm is outstretched, the fingers held in the same position and directly in line with the left hand. When the speaker mentions the gun being fired, he spreads out the fingers of both hands in a quick, flaring, movement.

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An obscene sign frequently demonstrated by boys and sometimes by girls is made by circling the foot with the thumb inserted under the index finger. This signifies coitus. In dancing hand pressing is often used as an erotic overture. A number of conventionalized gestures are used in the gambling game, including the indication of number by raising the corresponding number of fingers. Other signs include shaking the head up or down to affirmative or from side to side to express negation. The arms are used to express size. The left arm is stretched out, palm sideways, and size indicated with the right hand being placed at a right angle to the appropriate point. The point where the index finger joins the palm is marked off to indicate small size; the inside of the elbow or close to the shoulder are points marked off to show larger dimensions. To indicate height, the arm is outstretched palm sideways, the thumb slightly curved and the fingers close together. Height is indicated by the lowest portion of the hand. Nudging may sometimes be used for communication so, for example, to demand silence.

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Aboriginally the Kaska possessed no writing. The syllabaries introduced somewhere in the Athapaskan area by Catholic and Protestant missionaries were not developed in the Creation. Traders took the pains to teach a few individuals to read and write simple words, but only a score or so Indian men are literate and less than half a dozen women. Today most children of from seven to fifteen receive a few weeks of instruction in writing and reading each summer in the Catholic mission school. Adults set a high value on literacy and many parents express the desire that their children master these abilities so that they will be able to write simple messages to the traders, road bills, and otherwise help the older generation adjust to modern conditions. Young children do not often show these attitudes, but some young men, like Nido, spend several hours a week laboriously trying to learn to write words and elaborate sentences. Several times Nido asked the ethnographer for lists of familiar words such as the terms for commodities, local place names, and stock phrases ("I am going hunting,") which he could copy when the need arose.

[172]

Simple journals, often little more than calendars marking off the passage of the days and months, are kept by several young men. They contain brief mentions of outstanding events (arrival of visitors, hunting data, departures from the trading post, etc.). Sometimes the writer forgets to name a day in his journal and then his calendar is every. Excerpts from the journal kept by Harry Long in 1940 are given below; the original spelling and punctuation are preserved. Bracketed words are the ethnographer's.

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Aug. 1-th 1940 Stay at Lower Post, yes.
Aug. 2-th 1940 Start from Lower Post
Aug. 3-th 1940 At [Dal] place. We camp.
Aug. 4-th 1940 Start camp at Pleasant River.
Aug. 5-th 1940 We get Home upper [Dal Island] Creek.